Major actions that divided Jammu and Kashmir and confirmed that the princely state was not deliverable in its entirety to India or Pakistan. The first was a pro-Pakistan, anti-Maharaja uprising by Muslim Poonchis in western Jammu that 'liberated' large parts of this area from the Maharaja's control. The second was major inter-religious violence in the province that caused upheaval and death, including a possible massacre of Muslims. The third was the creation of the Provisional Azad (Free) Government in areas liberated or 'freed' by the Poonch uprising. This region soon popularly became known as 'Azad Kashmir'. These three actions all occurred during the ten-week interregnum between the creation of India and Pakistan on 15 August 1947 and Maharaja Hari Singh's accession to India on 26 October 1947. Each was initiated, and then largely undertaken, by J&K state subjects – local people of J&K who had a legitimate right to be in the princely state. The only exception was the inter-religious violence, which, while initiated by state subjects, also was fuelled by the arrival of refugees, external and internal, moving into or through Jammu Province, especially via the Sialkot-Jammu-Pathankot corridor.

The Jammuites' three actions in 1947 were highly significant. They caused a large number of deaths, many casualties and much dislocation. They divided Jammu Province politically, physically and militarily into pro-Pakistan and pro-Indian areas. They instigated the ongoing dispute over J&K's international status – the so-called Kashmir dispute – before Maharaja Hari Singh's accession to India. Indeed, as the evidence below shows, the dispute over whether J&K should join India or Pakistan began almost immediately after 15 August 1947 and was well under way in September 1947. During the short, post-Partition, British-free, pre-accession period, Hari Singh struggled to prevent the princely state's physical and political disintegration. He failed. When the Maharaja acceded to India on 26 October 1947, his armed forces had lost control of large parts of 'his' princely domain. By then, J&K was a divided state.

While the Jammuites' post-Partition actions in 1947 were significant, we know little about them. This is partly because India, specially, and Pakistan have generally ignored them. Since 1947, India has consistently claimed that all of the violence that occurred in J&K only began after, and as a result of, the invasion of Kashmir Province on 22 October 1947 by 'outsiders': Muslim Pukhtoon tribesmen from Pakistan. Unable to deflect India's accusations of being involved in the Pukhtoons' invasion, Pakistan acquiesced in India's tactic. Pakistan could have countered India's accusations by publicising the actions taken in J&K by 'insiders': state subjects in Poonch or violence against Muslims, but it chose not to. This is why it is important to discuss the Jammuites' actions in 1947.

People have been reluctant to delve into the embarrassing inter-religious violence in Jammu in 1947. While I have sought to use primary sources where possible, some of

the information presented below may be post factum justifications for actions and atrocities committed against, or by, 'the other community'. Equally, some suggests official involvement in violence. Most important, the evidence confirms that the people of J&K – and not outsiders – instigated the Kashmir dispute.

The British departure from the subcontinent in August 1947 caused two significant changes in J&K. First, Maharaja Hari Singh lost his guarantor, the British. No longer could he impose his will, almost with impunity, on the people of J&K, knowing that the British would support him or, at worst, ignore his actions. Neither could he rely on the (British) Indian Government to control subcontinental politicians, nor could he call on the support of (British) India's military to quell internal uprisings, as he had done in 1931, or to police J&K's porous borders and keep out intruders. Instead, Hari Singh came under increasing pressure from the new leaders of India and Pakistan over the accession issue, over the welfare of the people of J&K, and over the release of each dominion's respective political surrogates then languishing in J&K jails.

The Maharaja was charged with determining J&K's future status. This decision took on added significance after Muslim-majority Pakistan and secular (but Hindu-dominated) India were created. Partition confirmed that Hari Singh was on his own. Equally, it created expectations among the people of J&K that soon they also would be joining one of these new dominions. Their expectations were heightened when, by 15 August 1947, almost all of the rulers of Princely India had made accessions to India or Pakistan. This, in turn, put further pressure on Hari Singh to make an accession.

The Partition affected Jammu Province the most in the state. It was contiguous to Punjab, where violent and brutal inter-religious activity and mass migration was occurring. Some of these dislocated souls travelled via a major land route that ran from Sialkot, through Jammu City, to Pathankot, thus connecting the two new dominions. The presence of these refugees and their harrowing stories further agitated Jammuites who, like their Punjabi neighbours, were highly volatile throughout 1947. However, unlike the Kashmir and Frontier Districts provinces where Muslims comprised an overwhelming majority, Jammu Province had a Muslim majority in the west and a Hindu majority in the east. The majorities – and minorities – in each area were very restive in 1947. If their post-Partition activities are any indication, Jammu Province was the province whose residents had the most divisive political inclinations

in J&K in 1947. Muslims acutely wanted J&K to join Pakistan; non-Muslims, comprising Hindus and Sikhs, strongly favoured union with India.

After 15 August 1947, pro-Pakistan and pro-Indian elements in Jammu Province engaged in considerable violence. Much of this was not widely reported. As a percentage of the relative populations involved, deaths in Jammu Province may have been greater than in Punjab. Most newspapers chose not to publish stories about the violence in Jammu, partly because communications were disrupted by violence in newly-divided Punjab and the subcontinental attention was focused on violence in Punjab, or Bengal. Furthermore, to have published stories about a possible Muslim massacre in Jammu might have incited further bloodshed. In relation to J&K, attention was focused on Kashmir Province, particularly Srinagar. Maharaja Hari Singh was there, pondering his accession; many political leaders were in jail in Srinagar. The southern province was even less attractive when the maharaja was not in residence in Jammu City. And the Maharaja's government suppressed, adulterated or hindered news collection and reporting activities.

Hari Singh's administration was waging a 'ceaseless war against newspapers and journalists [sic] that [we]re in favour of Kashmir's accession to Pakistan'. By 7 October 1947, it had imposed 'rigorous precensorship on all news and views' published in at least four 'leading' local newspapers; it had banned the entry of four daily newspapers from West Punjab, and forced the 'Muslim' Kashmir Times to cease publication' after instructing its editor 'not to publish matter advocating Kashmir's accession to Pakistan'. The newspaper suspended publication in protest. In early October, the Maharaja's government interned the correspondent for Associated Press of India (API), a major source of news about J&K. On 21 October, Lahore's *Civil & Military Gazette*, which often took API reports, pointedly rebuked the J&K Government for its 'censorship of news in Kashmir when reports were in circulation of severe repressive measures adopted by the military forces of the State in Poonch'.

Little has been written about the major events in Jammu Province in 1947 because of Indian and Pakistani neglect. They, and their governments, have been engrossed in their war of words over J&K rather than factually determining what – or who – instigated the Kashmir dispute. Indian analysis of J&K invariably begins with, or conveniently focuses on, Pakistan's 'aggression by force' in J&K that started when Pakistan 'attacked' J&K on 22 October 1947 using Pukhtoon tribesmen. It then deals with the international aspects of the Kashmir dispute or discusses the Kashmir Valley and its important coterie of pro-Indian Muslims, where India, initially at least, appeared in a better light than Pakistan. Generally speaking, Pakistanis are

uninterested in what happened in Jammu Province in 1947. Rather, they focus on the pro-Pakistan action in Gilgit in November. The India and Pakistan governments also have political reasons for ignoring, negating or even denying the events that occurred in Jammu Province in 1947.

The Poonch uprising has been 'glossed over in virtually all accounts of the origins of the Kashmir dispute'. This serious and significant anti-Maharaja uprising by Muslims living in Poonch was a response to a number of factors. These included their dislike of the Hindu Maharaja and his repressive regime, their need to obtain protection from some anti-Muslim activities that the Maharaja's army engaged in soon after Partition, and their desire for J&K to join Pakistan. Additional factors included the provocative stationing of Dogra forces in Poonch in 1947, the 'invasion of Jammu by Sikhs' and other militant non-Muslims after partition, and disenchantment with corruption surrounding an unpaid per capita grant for personnel who had served in the Indian Army or the labour corps during World War II (while they were barred from serving in the Maharaja's army).

A further factor concerned the Poonchis' weakening ability to defend themselves. Hari Singh was aware that many more Poonchis and Mirpuris had military capabilities and experience than the numbers serving in his army. He also had been 'specially impressed and alarmed' by a gathering of some 40,000 men, 'almost all ex-servicemen of the British Army from Sudhnutti and Bagh Tehsils of Poonch, assembled to greet him on April 21, 1947 at Rawalakot' during his tour of the 'frontier areas' of J&K. In July 1947, the 'spooked' Maharaja's government 'encouraged' military-capable Poonchis and Mirpuris to disarm, including those 'on leave with arms and ammunition' from the Pakistan Army. These Muslims then became 'alarmed' when the J&K Police, with whom they had deposited their arms, redistributed these to Sikhs and Hindus for self-defence.

A further factor motivating Poonchis was the creation of Pakistan and the Maharaja's reaction to their support for it. The transfer of British power to the new dominions of India and Pakistan, coupled with Hari Singh's vacillation on the accession, inspired much interest, even fervour, among the people of J&K. In Poonch, many people were already identifying themselves with Pakistan. From 14 August, the day before Pakistan became a legal entity and a physical reality, pro-Pakistan, anti-Maharaja meetings took place in Poonch, even though public meetings were banned. Many Poonchis declared their desire for J&K to join Pakistan, particularly on 'Pakistan Day'

(14 August 1947) when they raised Pakistan flags and supported the Muslim Conference's (by now unequivocal) pro-Pakistan stance.

Motivated by these various factors, disgruntled Poonchis engaged in actions against the Maharaja to protect themselves. Anti-Maharaja activity possibly commenced as early as February 1947, and almost certainly was occurring by June 1947, when Poonchis mounted a 'no tax' campaign. A press note issued on 12 September by the J&K Government confirms this campaign: 'Early in August in ... Poonch Jagir, evilly disposed persons launched a violent agitation against the administration of the jagir in favour of civil disobedience and No Tax Campaign'. The Muslim unrest may also have included a 'no rent' element, a distinct possibility, given the Poonchis' grievances over land. The Maharaja and his armed forces moved to suppress this campaign. Around 15 August, they may also have begun to repress Muslims, by killing them or by forcefully disarming them. A 1948 publication stated that 'hundreds' of people in Bagh, a district in Poonch, were killed at a hoisting of the Pakistan flag to celebrate Independence Day. Two short telegrams to Jinnah on 29 August from the 'Muslims of Poonch' and the 'Muslims of Bagh' also spoke of anti-Muslim brutality by the Maharaja's forces around the same time. The Muslim Conference politician who became the founder President of Azad Kashmir, Sardar Muhammad Ibrahim Khan from Rawalakot in Poonch, was quoted by a 1949 publication as stating that the Maharaja had unleashed a 'reign of terror' on 24 August 1947 that killed 500 people. While the number of casualties cannot be confirmed, 'shoot-on-sight'orders were apparently issued to army officers on 2 September 1947.

The reaction of the ruler's predominantly Hindu army to Poonch Muslims' pro-Pakistan activities boosted the anti-Maharaja 'cause' in Poonch and incited Poonchis to take further action. In response to incidents around Poonch that invariably involved Muslims, the Maharaja's army fired on crowds, burned houses and villages indiscriminately, plundered, arrested people, and imposed local martial law. Indeed, because 'trouble continued … the State forces were compelled to deal with it with a heavy hand'. Until such oppressive actions, the anti-Maharaja cause probably had little backing. 'Substantial men' told Symonds that 'they would never have joined such a rash enterprise' opposing the Maharaja 'but for the folly of the Dogras who burnt whole villages where only a single family was involved in the revolt'. Such 'folly' motivated some Poonch Muslims to organise a people's resistance movement.

Towards the end of August, it be-came an armed revolt. Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan, twenty-four years old and with Indian Army military experience, apparently 'set the [military] ball rolling in Kashmir'. 'In six weeks the whole district except Poonch city itself was in rebel hands. In response, the Maharaja's army mounted an offensive in September and October 1947 against Poonchis 'who had shown some rebellious activities', and against Muslims in the predominantly Dogra areas of Jammu Province.

Hari Singh accused the new dominion on 4 September of infiltrating fully armed men into J&K, and in early October of mounting an economic blockade that deprived J&K of vital supplies. Pakistan denied both charges. India's 1948 White Paper on Jammu & Kashmir provided only one piece of hard evidence of cross-border activity (although an official 1949 Indian publication found twenty-five instances between 3 September and 20 October 1947). The author of the report in the White Paper was significant: Major-General Scott, the long-term Chief of Staff of the J&K State Forces. On 4 September 1947, he reported to J&K's Deputy Prime Minister that 'Reliable reports' from unnamed informants stated that 'a band of up to 400 Sattis – Muslim residents mainly in Kahuta Tehsil of Rawalpindi District' were infiltrating into J&K 'in the area of Owen, eleven miles east of Kahuta', with the purpose of 'looting and attacking minority communities'.

Scott's report of cross-border activity may have been accurate – there almost certainly was some support from Pakistanis for J&K Muslims. While 'Sattis' were Pakistani tribesmen, Poonchis or Mirpuris, who were of similar Punjabi ethnicity returning home from visits or stays in nearby Lahore or Rawilpindi could also be mistaken as such. The J&K-Pakistan border was very porous southwards from around Mirpur. It was an artificial line that superficially separated the northern end of the Punjab plains into Pakistani and J&K territory. A number of large Pakistani towns located near this border, including Jhelum, Gujrat and Sialkot, were closer to Mirpur than Jammu City. Similarly, Poonch was closer to Murree and Rawalpindi, than to Jammu City or Srinagar.

It is unlikely that Pakistanis were creating all of the Maharaja's troubles in western Jammu. Indeed, a number of factors suggest that the Poonch uprising was an indigenous affair. Pakistan was fully occupied dealing with the almost overwhelming physical, administrative and emotional ramifications of Partition. Any Pakistani support or leadership for Jammuites was probably not officially sanctioned. Rather, Punjabi or NWFP Muslims, with whom Jammu Muslims had close ethnic, familial, cultural, geographical and economic links, would have provided support on that basis. For example, some 'sudhans' from Poonch considered themselves to be 'sudho zai

Pathans' (Pukhtoons), which, for them, explained why 'the Pathans lost no time' coming to help J&K Muslims. Furthermore – and importantly – Poonch Muslims had the capability, given their military abilities and experiences, and the intent, given their anti-Maharaja grievances, to foment and sustain anti-Maharaja actions themselves. They did not need any Pakistani encouragement or assistance.

Geography also suggests that the Poonch uprising was an indigenous affair. The region that Poonchis inhabited was a remote, highland area difficult to access. The jagir was east of the border created by the Jhelum River, which, flowing southwards from a point west of Muzaffarabad to near Mirpur town, physically separated Pakistan and J&K. Poonch was much higher and more difficult to enter than the undulating Mirpur lowlands at the end of the Punjab plains. After crossing of the Jhelum at Kohala, 'the mountains of Poonch rise very steeply'. Furthermore, a person seeking to enter Poonch surreptitiously needed to secure transport to cross the swift-flowing Jhelum and avoid Kohala bridge, which the Maharaja's armed forces guarded. These forces made the task even more difficult when they 'cut off Poonch from direct communication with Pakistan' by destroying the six ferries that facilitated Jhelum crossings. Outsiders wanting to enter Poonch and create 'mischief' therefore needed to engage in a degree of planning and logistics, and to have some local knowledge and support – factors unnecessary for crossing the porous southern part of the Pakistan-J&K border.

After Muslims in western Jammu rearmed in August, they initially fought the Maharaja's forces locally until some leading Poonchis organised them into an 'army'. Poonchis had begun preparing to retaliate after the ruler's brutal suppression of their 'no tax' campaign. They started to rearm themselves in August, chiefly by purchasing weapons from NWFP arms bazaars. Thereafter, 'some sectors were organised for fighting the Dogras', but mostly the anti-maharaja struggle 'consisted of the uncoordinated efforts of each village, with its own band of guerrillas, taking care of the immediate military requirements'. These small, distant and often disparate 'village bands' were frequently commanded by all-powerful, self- promoting local leaders who, in some cases, promoted themselves up to the rank of field marshal. In early September Sardar Ibrahim and others began to form a unified command post in Murree to direct these various irregular people's forces. This nearby hill station was strategically, and safely, located in Pakistani Punjab on the main Rawalpindi-Srinagar road, part of which bordered Poonch. Ibrahim and his organisers received help from a number of sources including sympathetic Muslim soldiers in the J&K Army; ex-Indian National Army officers; ex-Indian Army officers; and, as the Maharaja had long suspected, members of Pakistan's army and its bureaucracy and other Pakistani

volunteers. It is uncertain if the Pakistanis' assistance was sanctioned at senior levels. Once fully organised, this motivated military force would pose the Maharaja, then India, significant problems.

According to Sardar Ibrahim, during September 1947, some 50,000 men were organised into a people's militia variously known as the 'Azad Army', 'Azad Forces' or 'Azad Kashmir Regular Forces'. This locally-officered volunteer 'army' comprised 90 per cent ex-servicemen, except in Bagh, where the percentage was lower. A 'very small percentage of Pakistani volunteers' fought with them, as may have twelve women. According to the Azad Kashmir Defence Minister, Colonel Ali Ahmad Shah (a former captain in the J&K State Force), the 'Azad Forces had been recruited locally or had risen spontaneously'. They comprised 'seasoned troops' with experience fighting in both world wars and the serious 'Waziristan Operations' (1920-21). After Azad Kashmir came into being, its 'Defence Council' assumed administrative control of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir Forces'. This council comprised seven members: two ministers (Defence, Finance); one bureaucrat (Defence secretary); two soldiers (commander-in-chief, chief of staff), and two 'public representatives' (members of the Muslim Conference).'Soldiers' were paid Rs. 10 per month from accumulated donations, although many men apparently refused wages. Clothing came from donations from local supporters and Pakistanis. The 'main problem' was a lack of arms, with some soldiers fighting with 'axes, spears and swords'. Most used arms and ammunition 'captured from the enemy in major and minor engagements' or obtained from Muslim deserters from the Maharaja's army. Communications were an issue, with men fighting 'in separate groups on many fronts … [with] no links with each other'. Couriers carried messages between Muzaffarabad and Bagh; elsewhere, post and telegraphic exchanges went via locations in Pakistan.

Initially confined to Jammu Province, the Azad Army's area of operation expanded into Kashmir Province. The Frontier Districts Province was omitted because 'the Gilgit organization was separate', with the Gilgit Scouts already including pro-Pakistan dissidents. Following their uprising, Pakistan sent a 'Political Agent' to the Gilgit area on 16 November 1947. The Azad Kashmir region was thus confined to the 'liberated' areas of Jammu and Kashmir provinces. This comprised two sectors: Jammu to Bhimber; Bhimber to Muzaffarabad. After about three months, the Azad Army was united under the leadership of 'General Tarik', by which time its enemy was Indian forces. Tarik subsequently was identified as Colonel Akbar Khan, a Pakistan Army regular determined to deliver J&K to Pakistan. In 1951 Khan, now a

major-general, and some co-conspirators attempted to overthrow the Pakistan Army high command which they considered complacent in pursuing J&K's liberation. They were court-martialled in the 'Rawalpindi Conspiracy' case.

Benefiting from shorter supply lines, rugged terrain, local knowledge and support, and high morale, the Azad Army built on the Poonch uprising to further oppose the Maharaja. By 22 September 1947, the Azad Army's military structure was functioning so well that Major-General Scott reported that the Maharaja's armed forces were losing control over large parts of J&K. The Maharaja's opponents were doing well, despite 'miserably lack[ing] a regular line of communication, and a regular supply of arms and ammunition'. By mid-to-late October, they controlled large parts of Poonch and Mirpur, while much of Muzaffarabad tehsil was being cleared of non-Muslims elements, including 'Sikhs, Dogras and R.S.S [Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh] cut-throats'. This latter activity mirrored anti-Muslim religious violence occurring in Jammu.

The Azad Army's success was significant: when Pukhtoon tribesmen entered Kashmir Province on 22 October 1947, most of western Jammu Province had already been liberated from the Maharaja's forces. Two days after the Pukhtoons' invasion – as India correctly called it – and possibly prompted by it, some anti-Maharaja elements in Poonch and Mirpur managed to form a government in the area outside the Maharaja's dwindling control. On 24 October 1947, they formed the Provisional Azad Government, which came into being two days before Maharaja Hari Singh's accession to India on 26 October 1947.

From 4 September 1947, newspapers started reporting an uprising in Poonch. These included CMG (4 September and 2, 5, 19, 21 October 1947); The Times (8 September and 25, 30 October 1947); and TOI (15, 17, 19, 20, 26 October 1947). On 8 September, The Times stated that, according to 'unconfirmed reports', Muslim demonstrators in Poonch had 'been involved in clashes with Hindu troops of the State forces, large numbers being killed'. On 2 October, CMG carried a copy of a telegram from the Kashmir Association, in Lahore, to Muhammad Ali Jinnah asking him to intervene because Muslims in Poonch were being 'butchered' and because Muslims elsewhere were 'greatly harassed by Dogra atrocities'. CMG carried a statement on 19 October by 'the Government of Kashmir' that confirmed trouble in Poonch allegedly assisted, but not instigated, by Pakistan: 'Disturbances aided by armed people from the Pakistan Dominion in the Poonch and Mirpur areas have been reported for some

days'. These had been 'causing hardships to law-abiding people', but the 'situation is now fully under control.'

Two days later – and with the situation not under control – CMG reported details of a telegram from the J&K Government to Pakistan. The telegram complained about atrocities committed against 'Kashmiris' by Pakistanis and 'difficulties created for the Kashmir Government by the Pakistan Government'. This ignored the antagonistic role played by the Maharaja, and the role played by local, disenchanted anti-Maharaja Muslim elements in Jammu. By 28 October, CMG editorialised that: "With regard to Kashmir, it is an established fact that killings and burnings in Poonch started long before the 'invasion' of Kashmir along the Jhelum road by tribesmen from the north-west. The presumption may be that neither India nor Pakistan had any standing 'vis-a-vis' the happenings in Poonch, these being an 'internal affair' in the hands of the Kashmir Government."

Civil and Military Gazette was in no doubt as to the sequence of events in relation to this 'internal affair'. Other press reports confirmed the role of Muslims in Poonch and Mirpur. On 25 October, The Times reported that 'in recent weeks' friction in J&K 'had taken the form of armed rebellion against the Maharaja by the Muslim peasantry of the western districts of Poonch Province [sic; it was a district of Jammu]'.The report continued that 'rebellious Muslims of the Bagh district [sic; it was a tehsil] … have succeeded in forcing the Kashmir State troops (mainly Hindu Dogras) to withdraw to the town of Poonch'. An editorial in The Times on 30 October reiterated this report: an 'insurrection broke out among the Muslim tribesmen of the western province [sic] of Poonch, the rebels protesting against the [Maharaja's] presumed intention to adhere to India'. Sheikh Abdullah, whose party many Poonchi Muslims strongly opposed, confirmed in New Delhi on 22 October the 'present troubles' in Poonch: 'The people of Poonch ... had started a people's movement for the redress of their grievances. It was not communal. The Kashmir State sent their [sic] troops and there was panic in Poonch … The present position was that the Kashmir State forces were forced to withdraw in certain areas'.This important statement by J&K's leading politician was made on the day that Pukhtoon tribesmen entered J&K. This news would reach New Delhi a few days later.

By 28 October 1947, the Pukhtoons' invasion was being widely reported. In a portent of ongoing attempts to ignore or deny the Poonch uprising, all anti-Indian forces fighting in J&K thereafter were usually described as 'raiders'. The (incorrect)

connotation was that all of them were from outside J&K. Nevertheless, on 28 October, The Times, while referring to the anti-Indian ‘raiding forces’, was still able to identify four elements among the 3,000 or so ‘Muslim rebels and tribesmen’ in J&K: (1) ‘Muslim League agents and agitators from Pakistan’; (2) ‘villagers who have raised the Pakistan flag and attacked Kashmir officials’; (3) ‘Pathan [Pukhtoon] tribesmen’; (4) ‘Muslim deserters from Kashmir State forces who have taken their arms with them’.

Given that the Muslim League had no branch in J&K, the first element may have been local pro-Pakistan Muslim Conference politicians and members. The second element certainly comprised people who were J&K state subjects, as almost certainly were members of the fourth element. These residents of J&K had every right to be in the (disintegrating) princely state, unlike the first and third elements. These state subjects also had commenced their anti-ruler activities well before the Pukhtoons invaded Kashmir Province on 22 October 1947.

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